

# South Carolina Department of Social Services

## Proviso 72.63: Best Management Practices Assessment Fiscal Year 2006-2007

By September 1 of each year, agencies appropriated funds in this act must report on their website a self assessment of the agency's use of the following best practices during the prior fiscal year. Agencies are encouraged to partner with other agencies for a peer review process. For each of the best practices, the agency must publicly rate itself as in compliance, in progress, or in non-compliance. State institutions of higher education are exempt from this requirement.

<i>Best Management Practices</i>	<i>Status</i>
<p><b>1. Integration of Planning and Budgeting: The agency employs a multi-year strategic planning process that links the planning process with the annual budget review.</b></p> <p>The agency uses a strategic planning process and mid-year budget review that links planning to its budget. To ensure that the agency's strategic plan is implemented, the state director, deputy state directors and division managers meet quarterly to assess progress in meeting planned goals and plan for any adjustments that are needed.</p>	<b>In Compliance</b>
<p><b>2. Internal Audit: The agency utilizes an active internal audit process that includes: (a) programmatic reviews along with fiscal reviews; (b) consistent follow-up on audit findings; and (c) reporting of the internal audit function to the institutional head and/or to the governing board, if applicable. Agencies that cannot afford a separate internal audit staff should use internal reviews that serve the same function as an internal auditor.</b></p> <p>The agency has a robust internal audit function that conducts fiscal, programmatic and performance reviews. The unit conducts routine follow up of important issues identified during reviews. In addition, the staff of planning and quality assurance review important agency processes and analyze management reports to ensure that programs are administered effectively and to determine if program outcomes are being achieved. Furthermore, the agency is analyzing a process that requires county DSS offices to undergo a detailed internal audit each time a new county director is appointed.</p>	<b>In Compliance</b>
<p><b>3. Collaboration and Partnerships: The agency demonstrates financially beneficial collaborative efforts with other public entities in performance of business functions including, as applicable, but not limited to, financial management, energy management, printing and publications, mail service, procurement, warehousing, public safety, security, space utilization, and parking.</b></p>	<b>In Compliance</b>

<i><b>Best Management Practices</b></i>	<i><b>Status</b></i>
<p>DSS strongly believes that the agency, as well as the public, benefits from collaborative efforts among public and private agencies. DSS has had an excellent partnership with non profit and faith-based organizations which have resulted in DSS clients obtaining services that would otherwise not have been possible. In addition, the agency has partnered with HHS to obtain a computer system that will mutually benefit both agencies and will enable both agencies to better serve clients who receive benefits from both DSS and HHS. The agency also has partnered with the Department of Corrections to increase child support collections. DSS works with federal and other state agencies to improve client services.</p>	
<p><b>4. Outsourcing and Privatization: The agency examines opportunities for contracting out various business functions, has performed cost analyses, and has implemented, where economically feasible, cost saving contracts.</b></p> <p>DSS continues to purchase services from the private sector and other agencies when it is more economical than funding the services in-house. The agency has contracted with IT experts to develop child support enforcement, family independence, and child welfare computer systems. In addition, as a result of an extensive cost-benefit analysis, the agency opted to lease new computers rather than purchasing them. DSS contracts with public and private providers of transportation and job training services to provide services to welfare clients. In addition, private organizations provide adoption services to foster children and assist the agency in placing children with adoptive families.</p>	<b>In Compliance</b>
<p><b>5. Process Analysis: The agency makes a critical examination of its business processes in an effort to increase productivity, reduce waste and duplication, and improve the quality of services provided to its internal customers.</b></p> <p>The agency examines business practices on a quarterly basis. Each quarter, executive staff and division managers meet to discuss program outcomes and barriers that affect service delivery. Staff are responsible for discussing processes that hinder effective service delivery, and provide recommendations for improvement.</p>	<b>In Compliance</b>
<p><b>6. Use of Automation and Technology: The agency uses a long range plan for improved use of technology to enhance business processes and takes deliberate efforts to implement this technology within budget constraints.</b></p>	<b>In Compliance</b>

<i><b>Best Management Practices</b></i>	<i><b>Status</b></i>
DSS has worked with the Budget and Control Board's Chief Information Officer to develop a long term information technology plan. As a result, some functions that can be provided more effectively by the CIO have been transferred.	
<p><b>7. Energy and Other Resource Conservation and Management: The agency uses a plan to conserve energy and other resources and has demonstrated positive results from the plan.</b></p> <p>The agency has an active recycling program and participates in the State Energy Conservation Program.</p>	<b>In Compliance</b>
<p><b>8. Preventive and Deferred Maintenance: The agency uses a regular program of preventive maintenance to preserve its physical assets and has developed a plan to address overdue maintenance needs for its facilities.</b></p> <p>County governments are responsible for providing and maintaining office space for DSS functions. Staff assess the adequacy of space and work with local governments to procure or renovate buildings when current facilities no longer meet the agency's needs. At the state level, DSS does not own its office space. The agency leases state-owned buildings from the Budget and Control Board.</p>	<b>In Compliance</b>
<p><b>9. Alternate Revenue Sources: The agency makes substantial efforts to identify and secure alternate revenue sources (excluding categorical grants for specific functions) to supplement funds available from state appropriations.</b></p> <p>The agency makes substantial efforts to identify alternative revenue sources. Each year, the agency examines services to determine if those provided to the public should be paid for with user fees. If fees are already being assessed, the agency determines if the fees are adequate. The agency has gained additional revenue through day care licensing fees, adoptive family home studies, and background checks.</p>	<b>In Compliance</b>
<p><b>10. External Annual Financial Audit Findings: The agency minimizes or avoids all management letter and single audit findings in the annual audit performed or supervised by the State Auditor, especially violations of state law, material weaknesses, and single audit "findings" and "questioned costs."</b></p>	<b>In Compliance</b>

<i><b>Best Management Practices</b></i>	<i><b>Status</b></i>
The agency has minimized management letters and findings by the State Auditor. DSS seriously addresses all matters identified by the State Auditor, and has a close working relationship with audit staff and works to correct any problems before the audit is concluded.	
<p><b>11. External Review Findings: The agency minimizes or avoids all non-compliance findings related to its business practices in external reviews and audits.</b></p> <p>DSS business practices are reviewed by internal auditors, internal managers, state auditors, the Legislative Audit Council, and federal auditors. Findings of staff and outside reviewers are thoroughly examined, and recommendations are implemented as promptly as possible.</p>	<b>In Compliance</b>
<p><b>12. Long Range Capital Plan: The institution uses a long range (minimum three to five years) capital improvement plan for major capital requirements for its buildings and has, subject to fund availability, begun implementation of the plan.</b></p> <p>DSS does not own any buildings or land, but leases property from the Budget and Control Board or the private sector. DSS works with staff of the Budget and Control Board to assess building needs and to obtain assistance with office needs.</p>	<b>In Compliance</b>
<p><b>13. Risk Management: The agency has an active risk management program in place to minimize its losses.</b></p> <p>DSS has taken an active role in reducing losses associated with personnel issues. The agency instituted a workplace violence prevention program designed to reduce violent incidents in the workplace. Also, disciplinary actions taken by managers are reviewed by legal staff to ensure that agency rules and personnel policies are followed. As a result, the number of successful staff grievances has been minimal. To reduce unauthorized entry into the state office and improve safety to DSS workers, entry into the building is limited to only staff with specialized identification cards.</p>	<b>In Compliance</b>